

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the amendments above and the remarks following is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-40 are in this case. Claims 31, 33 and 34 have been allowed. Claims 1, 14, 26, 29, 30 and 35 have been rejected under § 102(b). Claims 2, 3, 5-9, 17, 18, 27, 28, 37, 38 and 40 have been rejected under § 103(a). Claims 3, 12, 13, 22, 23, 27, 28, and 32 have been rejected under § 112. Claims 4, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19-21, 24, 25, 36 and 39 have been objected to. Independent claims 1 and 35 have now been amended to include the limitations of now-canceled objected claims 4 and 36, respectively. Claims 3, 13, 22 and 32 have been amended to overcome the § 112 rejections identified by the Examiner. The amendment of claim 22 also overcomes the § 112 rejection of claim 23, which is dependent from claim 22. Claim 2 has been amended to reflect amendments to claim 1.

The claims before the Examiner now correspond to allowable subject matter identified by the Examiner.

Objections to the Specification

The Examiner has objected to the specification for a minor informality. Specifically, the Examiner has pointed out that the reference to Section 120 on page 1 of the specification should be Section 119(e). The specification has now been amended to address this problem. The Applicant believes that the specification is now free from the informalities identified by the Examiner.

Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 14, 26, 29, 30 and 35 under § 102(b) and claims 2, 3, 5-9, 17, 18, 27, 28, 37, 38 and 40 under § 103(a). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

While continuing to traverse the Examiner's rejections, and without in any way prejudicing the patentability of the rejected claims, the Applicant has, in order to expedite the prosecution, chosen to amend independent claims to conform to allowable subject matter identified by the Examiner. Specifically, independent claims 1 and 35 have now been amended to include the limitations of now-canceled objected claims 4 and 36, respectively.

The Applicant believes that the amendment of the claims renders moot the Examiner's rejections.

In view of the above amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 35, and hence also dependent claims 2, 3, 5-11, 13-25 and 37-40, are in condition for allowance. Prompt notice of allowance is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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